

Verbum Dei

Guidelines for Prayer

Your Sins
are
forgiven!

Lk. 7:48

November 4-10, 2019

General Theme: God's Merciful Love

General Objective: To experience the joy of God's unfailing love and forgiveness that impels the person to desire to live and start anew, with the heart filled also with mercy for others.

Objective of the week: To enter into the experience of being loved and forgiven by Him, despite one's sins and failures and to take a step towards God.

INTRODUCTION

"Your sins are forgiven." Hearing those words, what can it mean to us? It's just going back to life.

Our God is a God of the living. As such, He wants us all alive. Thus, embracing us in our misery, in our sinfulness.

Our God continues to yearn to have a deeper relationship with each one of us. He can never give up on any of us. He waits for us to journey back to Him. It is His joy when one goes back to Him.

The books of the Old and New Testament provide us with the first and fundamental fact concerning the Lord's mercy and forgiveness. In the Psalms and in the preaching of the prophets, the name merciful is perhaps the one most often given to the Lord, in contrast to the persistent cliché whereby the God of the Old Testament is presented above all as severe and vengeful. Thus, in the Psalms there is a long sapiential passage drawing from the Exodus tradition, which recalls God's kindly action in the midst of his people. This action, though represented in an anthropomorphic way, is perhaps one of the most eloquent Old Testament proclamations of the divine mercy. Suffice it to quote the verse: "Yet

He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; He restrained His anger often, and did not stir up all His wrath. He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and comes not again." (Ps. 77/78:38) (St. Pope John Paul II, *Reconciliation and Penance*, 29)

Let us entrust ourselves to the mercy of our God that is beyond our comprehension.

MONDAY
(St. Charles Borromeo)

**God's mercy transforms
our misery**

Ho. 11:8-9

How can I give you up, Israel? How can I abandon you? Could I ever destroy you as I did Admah, or treat you as I did Zeboiim? My love for you is too strong. I will not punish you in my anger; I will not destroy Israel again. For I am God and not a mere human being. I, the Holy One, am with you. I will not come to you in anger.

Lk 23:34

Jesus said, "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing.

God, in his abundant love does not abandon his children, rather he comes down to our misery.

It is the nature of God's mercy that His heart extends into our misery and redeems it. This is the answer to the mystery of human suffering as it relates to redemption. Mercy signifies that God draws our misery into His own infinitely loving heart.

What are the misery or miseries that you are experiencing now? Do you still want to be in this situation? Have you recognized that the misery or miseries that you are experiencing is or are caused by your separation from the Love of God in choosing to say no to Love?

TUESDAY

**God's grace is greater
than our sins**

Rom. 5:20

Law was introduced in order to increase wrong doing, but where sin increased, God's grace increased much more.

The summation of the many sins we committed and the many sins we are about to commit doesn't compensate or equate to the grace that God has bestowed on us through His great mercy. We can scan our own life's history, for the fact that we are still alive to this very moment is attributed to our God's overflowing mercy towards us. Mercy will always be greater than any sin, and no one can place

limits on the love of God who is ever ready to forgive. (cf.MV 3)

Do you recognize in your own life the super abundant mercy and grace of our God even when we are in the state of sin?

WEDNESDAY

I don't condemn you!

Jn. 8:1-11

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he went back to the temple. All the people gathered around him, and he sat down and began to teach them. The teachers of the law and Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught committing adultery, and they made her stand before them all. Teacher, they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. In our law Moses commanded that such a woman must be stoned to death. Now, what do you say? They said this to trap Jesus, so that they could accuse him. But he bent over and wrote on the ground with his finger. As they stood there asking him questions, He straightened up and said to them, "whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her." Then he bent over again and wrote on the ground. When they heard this, they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone with the

woman still standing there. He straightened up and said to her, where are they? Is there no one left to condemn you? "No one sir" she answered. "Well then," Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again."

Jesus shows that God remembers not the gravest sin we have committed nor have a heart of condemnation, but rather a compassionate and merciful heart. God cannot condemn for its never, not even a bit of His identity as our God. What is sometimes unacceptable is when we, ourselves are not convince that we are forgiven by God for we think and we felt that we hurt Him so badly and we can't even forgive ourselves for such offense. In short, we are the one condemning our very own self. Nothing can separate us from the Love of God even the gravest sin is not grave for him.

How do I find myself in front of a grave offense I have done before God? How can I be more patient with myself and learn to trust God's merciful love?

THURSDAY

I embraced suffering for you!

Is 53:5-6

But because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the

evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received. All of us are like sheep that were lost, each of us going his own way. But the Lord made the punishment fall on him, the punishment all of us deserved.

Sin and God can never be together. As it is the Father's greatest desire to be with us, He was the first one to connect with us by giving His own begotten son, a bridge between God and His people.

Do I recognize the greatest proof of love that the Father has for me through Jesus His son?

FRIDAY

God's mercy never ends

Ps 116: 15

How painful it is to the Lord when one of his people dies!

Is 54:10

The mountains and hills may crumble, but my love for you will never end; I will keep forever my promise of peace."So says the Lord who loves you.

How fortunate we are to have a God who is "rich in mercy". As Pope Francis said, "In mercy, we find proof of how God loves us. He gives His entire self, always, freely, asking nothing in return." This

eases our heart and experience peace within.

Who are those people that the Lord is presenting to you right now that needs your love and mercy by forgiving them?

SATURDAY

God's mercy is our hope

Ps 34: 17-18

The righteous call to the Lord, and he listens; he rescues them from all their troubles.¹⁸The Lord is near to those who are discouraged; he saves those who have lost all hope.

God always wants us to be mindful and to depend always in His great mercy for us. His mercy is not an abstract idea. It's a force that overcomes everything. (cf. Misericordiae Vultus 9). We need his mercy to grow as human beings and become who we are really meant to be.

Are we hopeful to the Father that one day He will also touch the heart of so many people who needs forgiveness?

32nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1st Reading – 2 Maccabees 7:1-14

Resp. Psalm – Ps 17:1-15

2nd Reading – 2 Thes.2:16-3:5

Gospel – Luke 20:27:38